

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz) <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

Issue 5: June 2016

## CLUB MEETINGS

Club meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month at the Rose City Aquatic Club Rooms, 50 Park Street, Palmerston North (next to the Lido). Meetings begin at 7.30pm.

➡ **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May: AGM** ⬅

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June: Foot Work – Podiatrist Murray MacDonald**



Tramping can be all about your feet but shouldn't be. If they hurt, things become pretty miserable and if they are not correctly aligned and sufficiently supported then the flow on effects to ankles, knees and hips can cause considerable issues. Come along to learn how better to look after, support and protect your feet to make your tramping more enjoyable!



**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July: The Aorangi Restoration Trust - Bob Burgess**



The Aorangi Restoration Trust was established in 2011. Our project covers the Aorangi Forest Park and its surrounds south of Martinborough to Cape Palliser, an area of 80,000 ha. We are working to restore the indigenous lowland, montane and sub-alpine forest, coastal and marine ecosystems, streams and wetlands. Currently our major effort is on predator trapping to complement the use of 1080 poison in August 2014, the first of three aerial drops over 10 years.



# REPORTS AND NOTICES

## MTSC President Report: John Beech

[president@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz)



Hi all, hope you are all spending a bit of time in the bush or preparing your skis for the upcoming snow season.

Over the school holidays I spent 11 days in the South Island with a school trip, the primary purpose being to walk the Milford Track. The Milford was a wonderful experience although we saw nothing but fog and cloud the day we walked over McKinnon Pass. Unfortunately for me I have recently been diagnosed with arthritis in my knee and I tossed up whether to go or not. I am now paying the price for that decision. However, the students and my other two colleagues thoroughly enjoyed the trip. Although my knee detracted somewhat from the enjoyment (always at the back, miles behind the rest), I got immense satisfaction in seeing the kids appreciating the amazing scenery. We had 2 fine days up the Clinton and 2 wet days down the Arthur so got the waterfalls off the mountains as well. We expected to be the minority nationality but this was not so as more than half the walkers were Kiwis. The kids loved mixing with the other people and especially enjoyed the foreign visitors. It made me think about how we relate to teenagers when we come across them in our travels. Yes, they can be a little noisy and messy but they are full of life and fun and I am sure we can all remember being that way at that age. In fact, when I first joined the club in 1974 there were many young people and I remember rather large groups packing out huts and putting up tents in places such as Avalanche Flats. Most of the adults that we came across were very accommodating and put up with all the hustle and bustle of the young ones without complaint. My point with all this rambling is that I hope we all take the time to encourage young people when we see them in the hills. After all, they are the future and I think it is vital that we keep them coming back as without them using our huts and tracks there is more likelihood of them disappearing through lack of use. It is also important to help teach the younger ones how to tramp safely and without disrupting other user's enjoyment. Sometimes a quiet and tactful word about hut etiquette will be needed as many have not had the mentoring that we have received through being in a club.

In the meantime, I am stuck with a stuffed knee and this means the only huts and tracks I will see are those in magazines and books from an armchair.

One other point to note and that is track maintenance, particularly unofficial cutting of new tracks or old unmaintained ones. The club has recently been contacted by DOC regarding a newsletter item where club members appear to have been taking part in the cutting of a new track. I want to remind us all that the club does not condone such actions as they are illegal. DOC are more than happy for us to do a bit of maintenance on official tracks but would encourage anyone contemplating such actions to let them know. Let's make sure we work with DOC.

See you all at the AGM on the 17<sup>th</sup> May. *John*

## MTSC Chief Guide Report: Ken Mercer

[chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz)



Winter is arriving so it is likely that river crossings will be more difficult. This was highlighted by the accident report in the latest FMC Bulletin. I have recently repeated a course where we went over the basics and practiced a number of techniques. Condensing the full day into a couple of paragraphs is tricky but here goes.

River safety can begin before you leave home. Check your intended route – are there any unbridged river crossings? What is the weather forecast? What has the weather been doing for the last couple of days? Many rivers are monitored by the local regional councils and the river level can be found on-line. If any of these things ring alarm bells consider an alternative route or postponing your tramp.

When in the hills, do not cross if doubtful, is the first piece of advice. Use an alternative route or erect your emergency shelter and hunker down until the level drops – better late than dead.

When crossing use the method of mutual support. The idea is to be locked together firmly so most of the group is in the lee of the strongest person. Chest straps are undone, shoulder straps loosened but hip belts remain secure. Your pack is your buoyancy so you want it attached.

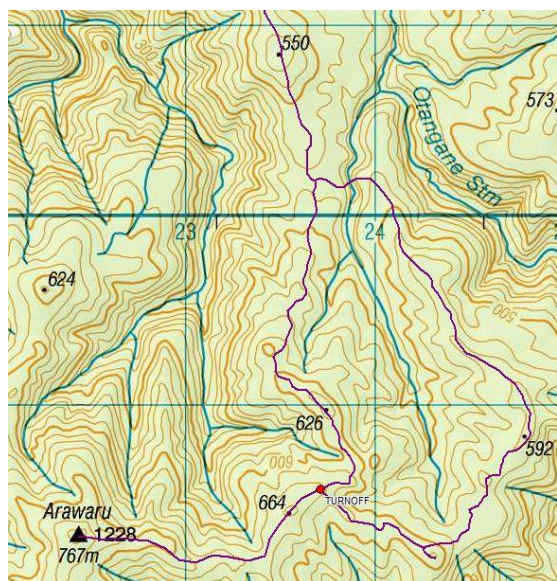
Your arm goes between your immediate neighbour's back and their pack and you grasp a strap on their far side, or even that of the next person along, closing your hand around it. This is more secure than a claw grip.

Mutual support is a good thing to practice on your next river trip, even if the water is only ankle deep. Take a look at the [Mountain Safety Council](#) for more details.



## Improved Route to Arawaru trig from the Sledge track

Report: Merv Matthews



Many members have walked the Otangane Loop which was officially opened to the public on 5th March 2016. Some have also tested another fairly adventurous loop incorporating a portion of the Otangane loop, the Arawaru trig, an old hunters' trail and a baitline track along the Quartz ridge. Further work on this loop will be necessary to clearly mark certain sections of it to prevent people going astray.

This is to let you know that the section of track running from the turnoff on the Otangane loop up to Arawaru trig has been improved with further cutting and marking. Dave Grant and I made two trips up there to do this work, but the fixing of orange triangles remains to be done. This will make a useful return trip from the Sledge track up to the trig and back.

The entrance to the track remains concealed from the curious until appropriate signs are erected, but those with a GPS can load the

waypoint "Turnoff" in order to locate the correct spot, and also load the track file if desired. The two .gpx files can be downloaded to your PC from my Dropbox using the following links:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/x01wom86cpjbcq/Otangane-Arawaru%20t.gpx?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/rjla0mbc5sn9wxh/TURNOFF%20wp.gpx?dl=0>

*Editors note: this is on PNCC land not DOC land.*

## Lodge Food

Report: Howard Nicholson - Ski Captain

I have been coordinating the food supplies at the Manawatu Lodge at Ruapehu for several years now. Over that time, I have gathered information about the type of food that is being used and how much. We purchase food in June and restock the larder prior to the start of the ski season, then top up the stock as required during the year. To reduce wastage we purchase small quantities of perishable items, such as eggs and veges, during the season.

You already know that staying at the lodge represents high value at rock-bottom prices (see <http://www.mtsc.nz/lodge.php>). When we purchase goods for the lodge we look for value - good wholesome food, without going over the top on luxury items or food that doesn't store well. Things like bread, fresh milk, short-life perishables, and alcohol are brought in by you at the time of your visit, whereas all of the basic goods for dinner, breakfast, hot beverages, cleaning, etc. are already at the lodge. Stock is rotated so that the older products are used first, further reducing wastage.

We have some members who are ever-willing to help out with stocktakes and restocking. It is also helpful if people can let me know when we are running low on items.

This is where you come in. I am putting the food list together now, in preparation for our main "food carry" trip in mid-June. If you have any comments about the food, good or bad, or if you are able to help out with restocking during the season, then please let me know, 357 6325.

## University of Auckland Ski Club 50th anniversary

This year the University of Auckland Ski Club is celebrating its 50th anniversary. To mark this important milestone the club is planning a formal reunion dinner at Orakei Bay in Auckland on 23 July. Find out more about other reunion activities the club is planning and register your interest.

<https://www.uasc.co.nz/50thRegister.html>



**Trip Intentions:** The email address for leaving trip intentions is [intentions@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:intentions@mtsc.org.nz). Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to LandSAR/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a PLB is activated. The email should include: a list of participants and their contact details; a brief description of the intended route and possible alternative routes; starting point; start date; date/time due out; vehicle registration; and any other relevant details.

June Wednesday Tramps			June Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone	Date	Leader	Phone
1	Jenny Orange	357 3380	2	Carolyn Brodie	358 6576
8	Evan & Coralie Davies	357 6288	9	Suzanne Clarke	356 8322
15	Liz & Arthur Flint	356 7654	16	Craig Ross	355 3445
22	Linda Darbyshire	354 6171	23	Nigel & Jill Spencer	329 8738
29	Bev Akers	325 8879	30	Norman Cooper	357 5531

June Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
4 - 6	Walks around Wellington	Easy Med	Alla Seleznyova	027 308 9583
11 - 12	Lodge Food Carry	All	Howard Nicholson	357 6325
18 - 19	Elder Hut	Med Fit	Dave Mitchell	329 2803
25 - 26	Gentle Annie Saddle - Navigation	Easy	Tim Swale	06 376 6556

### 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May: Herricks/Dead Dog huts

Unfortunately this trip is cancelled due to the trip leader's ongoing knee issues – I'm sure something a lot of us can sympathise with.

### 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> June: Walks around Wellington

Easy / Medium

Alla Seleznyova

027 308 9583

There are a variety of walks in Wellington and its surroundings.

<http://wellington.govt.nz/recreation/enjoy-the-outdoors/walks-and-walkways>

We did some of them on our previous trip in January. This time, I am very keen to do the Skyline Walkway from Johnsonville to Karori. This walk traverse 12kms of Wellington's ridge tops following the Outer Green Belt onto Mount Kaukau, the Crow's Nest, Kilmister Tops and Johnston Hill, and it takes about 5 hours. Another possible walk is the City to Sea Walkway, which starts at the Parliament House and goes via the Botanical Garden, Aro Valley and Newtown reserves to Island Bay. It's a 12km walk, which takes 6 - 7 hours. I am also interested in doing a loop walk





*The turn off for pinnacle spur*



*The many bumps on pinnacle spur*

Although the morning had been clear as we steadily climbed up to Pukematawai and Arete, there was still an easterly breeze bringing light cloud to the tops. We descended to Arete Hut for lunch and then climbed up to the northern end of the Waiohine Pinnacles, where finally we were rewarded with grand views of the Tararua tops. We dropped steeply onto Pinnacle Spur, traversed or sidled the many bumps on the ridge and then slowly descended the steep track to the Waingawa River. Arete Forks Hut sits deep in the heart of the Tararua Ranges and has a wonderful view up the Waingawa Valley to Tarn Ridge. Although the river may one day threaten its current location, DOC has committed to keeping this hut, after several user submissions to their 2004 recreational opportunities review called for the hut to be retained. In 2015, DOC re-routed the high side track to Cow Creek, maybe confirming this commitment. A group of ex-NZFS deer cullers are doing a fantastic job of maintaining this and other remote Tararua Huts.



*The very orange Arete Forks hut*

Despite Dr Pete claiming that the directions for our dinner of instant spud, mince and veges was too complicated, we were soon well fed and in our bags heading to the land of nod. Easter Sunday started with a clear autumn morning and soon we were crossing the Waingawa River to find a route north up to the tops. This route is relatively easy to follow up through the bush then follows a small gut up a short steep section before the final tussock spur leads to the ridgeline near Waingawa. We enjoyed an early lunch in the sunshine, but a westerly wind was getting stronger and soon the cloud that had built up to the west came spilling over Dundas Ridge as we cruised along Cattle Ridge. We noted new building supplies at Cattle Ridge Hut, which looks set for a major renovation or replacement. Footsore and weary from the descent to the Ruamahanga River, we rolled into Roaring Stag Hut (re-built 2005) and met up with others from our respective families, who had earlier walked in from Putara Road. As is often the case, the hut was brimming with people and it was great to hear the buzz of conversations from those enjoying the hills.

Now rearranged into our family tramping units, on a stunning Autumn Monday morning we passed through some of the nicest mixed forest in the Tararuas, over the ridge and down into the Mangatainoka River. After visiting six huts, four river catchments and a bunch of hills in between, we completed our four-day crossing of the Tararua Ranges. Thanks to Hugh Nicholson and Peter Rawlins for a memorable crossing, and Sue and Tara Nicholson for the night at Roaring Stag.

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## **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April: Wednesday Wilderness Walkers vs The Apiti Track**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen Naylor

19 trampers assembled at the new car park for the Apiti Track off Ngamoko Road in the hinterlands of Norsewood. The forecast was for showers clearing but we arrived in cool, dry overcast conditions. We were pleased to find the immediate start to the track unexpectedly easy going. As if by magic, the heavily bogged and pugged area at the start had been smoothed by the recent introduction of drainage. The weather in the first hour or so was dry as we climbed steadily up the farm track then on through the bush to the first open top. On the top, there was little wind, so some of us searched for Rita's walking pole blown out of her hands on our last visit to the track. There was no

sign of it. There was a consensus that there had been considerable growth since our last visit. As we regained the canopy the rain started; it was gentle at first but as the day wore on the frequent showers became heavier. As we proceeded up and along, the track became progressively more demanding. The fast group reported that this trend continued culminating in a new and nasty slip before the junction. Most of that group turned without crossing the slip but at least two made it across only to regret their decision.



*A Dry Start to a Wet Day (Yuck! What's that Bernard?)*



*A Breather after the First Hour*

With a 9.28am (!) start, all turned back at about 12.30pm and all were safely out by shortly after 3pm. It was a wet, cool trudge out for us all with the heavy showers making for slippery conditions on a rough track in desperate need of track work. Overall we met the challenge of the track except that nobody made it to the junction; honours even? We then repaired to Cafe Norsewood on Coronation Street, where we were made most welcome! We learned that the sometime grumpy ex-manager now drives the school bus....

Thanks to trip leader Maurice and our drivers including, as they say in Wales, Evan the MiniBus.

## **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April: WWWs with the Bigger Digger and the Mangaone Walkway**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen Naylor

29 intending Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers rendezvoused at the Otaki Gorge turnoff car park. It was a warm morning on a lovely autumn day with few clouds and little wind. We were intent on tramping the Mangaone Walkway there and back from the northern, Reikorangi end. Recent tramps had been rugged and or wet, so a softer tramp made an inviting prospect. We were aware that logging operations had been notified so it did not come as a surprise when our convoy started to reverse about a km before the car park. Our vehicles pulled over in suitable refuges and a large, fully loaded logging truck and trailer trundled down the narrow shingle road. It was then that we were informed that the car park was monopolised by an outsized digger and that we were to allow a 7m wide trailer unit down the road to collect it. This we did. It was an exasperated group that then motored to the southern entrance of the walkway. Unfortunately because of the delayed start, three trampers withdrew so it was a party of 26 that assembled at ~10.40pm at the start of the track. We all enjoyed the tramp along the old tram route made in ideal conditions though the logging road was hot and dusty. For the record about a third of the party tramped through to the far end of the track just in time to see our nemesis, the bigger digger being driven away on the oversized trailer unit. By 2.40am all the party were safely out after a relaxed and very social tramp. With a return distance of 16.8km and a height gain of a mere 139m it was a gentle tramp.

Thanks to trip leader and van driver Evan (who reversed for about a km along the narrow road) and our car drivers.



*The car park hogging big digger getting ready to leave*



*Sunshine and good company!*

## **ANZAC weekend 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April: At Ruapehu**

Report: Linda Campbell

Photos: Ken Mercer

We were very fortunate with the weather over ANZAC weekend although Adam and Jenny, who joined us for the night on Saturday, weren't so lucky. While we had a bit of rain on Saturday and some dampness due to low cloud, they were further up on the mountain where they said it had rained for about 80% of their walk.

Eleven of us set off on the Saturday morning and after a coffee stop at Taihape headed to National Park for the walk to Tupapakuraa Falls. The track begins on Fisher Road close to the start of the Fishers Track which is part of the Mountains to Sea Cycle Trail. The walk took us through beautiful bush with an occasional hint that there would be a view out there somewhere but for the low cloud. Besides the view of the waterfall, a highlight was several beautiful blue mushrooms growing between the second and third gravel drop off points. The track is being improved and buckets of gravel can be carted along the way to help with the project. The decision was made not to go to the base of the falls due to the time and the weather so we headed up to our lovely lodge arriving in the car park about the same time as Adam and Jenny.



*The group*



*The Tupapakuraa Falls*



*The blue fungi*

On Sunday morning Helen and Alan decided to join Adam and Jenny and went back to the Tupapakuraa Falls before travelling back to Palmerston North. After checking the weather forecast several times the remaining nine of us headed cross country to find the Stanton Memorial. A bit of navigation was required, more so as we left the lodge rather than going down to the Whakapapaiti track entrance and following the route the Taupo Tramping Club had kindly shared on line. We encountered bluffs we hadn't expected and had to find a way down which added to the adventure. There were some very steep downhill sections but the views of the waterfalls along the way made it worthwhile. Stanton Memorial is a memorial to a young man who was a member of a group of fourteen Auckland University students who climbed Ruapehu in 1931. While the party was at the top a blizzard came in and visibility dropped to pretty much nothing. As a consequence the party became lost on their descent. They ended up splitting



into several groups which spent between one and three nights on the mountain as the storm continued. On the third day Warwick Stanton set off to get help. Sadly he was the only member of the group that did not survive. His body was found three weeks later in the forest on a tributary of the Makatote. A large rock, with the plaque, which is known as Stanton memorial, is thought to be where the party spent the first night. From the memorial we navigated our way back to the round the mountain track with more very steep downhill sections and better views of the waterfalls. Once we met the round the mountain track it was uphill past the turn off to Whakapapaiti Hut and up to the Bruce Road. Ken kindly offered to go ahead up the road with part of the group and bring the van down for the rest which was appreciated by all who didn't fancy the walk up the road.



*Cross country travel*



*Stanton Memorial rock*



*One of the many waterfalls*

Monday was a beautiful day so we set off for Tongariro with the plan to walk until 12.30pm and turn back as some group members needed to get home in reasonable time to prepare for work the next day. After a short stop at Mangatepopo Hut we headed across the creek and up onto the ridge. It was a lovely walk along the ridge with clear views all around. The decision was made for Ken and the three young men to go head and aim to reach the summit while the rest of us continued on at a comfortable pace. We found a lovely spot to stop before the really steep bit and watched their progress. They got there by 12.10pm and had a quick lunch before beginning their descent at 12.30pm as promised. We also headed back at the same time but about half way they caught us up all very pleased to have got to the top.



*Enjoying the views*



*Ngarahoe and Ruapehu from Tongariro*



*Scree running*

It was a fantastic weekend and I thank Ken and Mary Mercer, Pak-Lam and Nina Yu, Sebastian Linnenkugel, Edward de Haas, Jos Swagemakers, Jill Stewart, Helen Peek, Alan Hawkins, Jenny McCarthy and Adam Matich for their company.

## **ANZAC weekend 24<sup>th</sup> April 2016: Stanton Memorial, Ruapehu**

Report & Photos: Pak Lam Yu

Before I did this walk, I could not tell the difference between a bluff and a cliff, or a pile of stones and a cairn. It was a misty morning after the rain from the previous day. We had breakfast at the Ski Lodge, turned on the slow cooker for the meat dish, and headed off SW up the slope of Ruapehu. After crossing a couple of small streams, in the distance, we caught a glimpse of the top of Mt Doom (Ngauruhoe) over the Pinnacle Ridge. It was a great delight to my daughter Nina, who was visiting from Australia. Low clouds managed to stay below us and the weather got better as we progressed. Before reaching the Stanton Memorial, I



*Admiring one of the waterfalls*

noticed in places, there were small piles of stones placed on top of larger rocks. As a memorial symbol and direction, they are called cairns.



*Taking a break by the memorial rock*

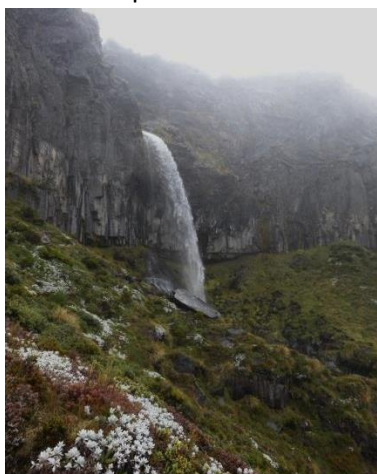


*The memorial plaque*

Finally we arrived at the Memorial (altitude 1582m). Warwick Stanton was a student at the University of Auckland, who passed away at 18 years' old in a heroic effort to get help for his tramping group. After lunch, our route swung NW, parallel to the Whakapapaiti Stream, which originates from this side of the mountain. Narrow silver water tracks gathered momentum as they joined to become waterfalls and flowed down the gully. Before reaching the Whakapapaiti Stream, we needed to descend carefully down a row of bluffs (vertical rocky faces). Our chief guide Ken Mercer led the way and showed his experience in picking the best spot to cross the Whakapapaiti Stream. We walked over beautiful alpine meadow (see photo, do not know the name of the silver coloured plant which was in full bloom). There was yet another waterfall, as we crossed the Whakapapaiti Stream. On the other side, we walked over water-locked but fairly levelled peat land. Finally we reached the Round the Mountain Track, which was well-marked with the orange triangle on wooden poles. It zig-zagged its way NE up a slope until it joined the Bruce Road. By courtesy of Ken, a few of us had a ride back to the car park. After watching a colourful sunset, we settled into our dinner---pulled beef, steamed broccoli and courgettes, roasted carrots and potato, and chilled Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc. Dessert was chocolate pudding. It was a memorable day in the Tongariro National Park. Thank you Linda Campbell for organising this wonderful trip.

## **ANZAC weekend 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> April: Waterfalls Trip**

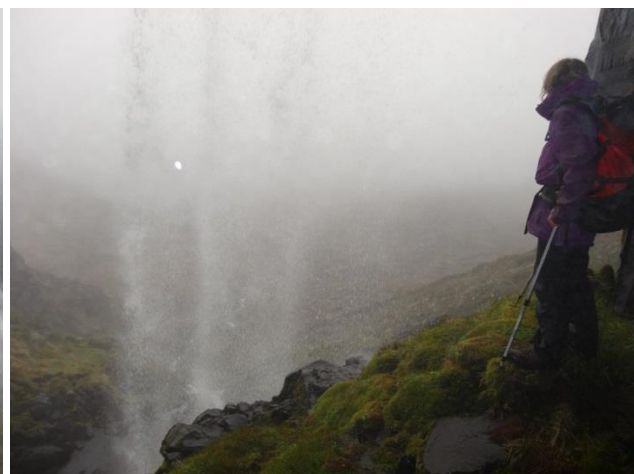
Report & Photos: Adam Matich



*Close*



*Closer*



*The view from behind the waterfall*

As Linda was hosting a relaxed tramping weekend at the Lodge, Jenny and I thought we would do a lodge over-nighter with a bit of waterfall exploration. On the Saturday morning we headed up to the beginning of the around-the-mountain track on the Bruce Road. There were light skiffs of rain and a continuous drizzle with poor visibility, so we weren't that enthused by the day ahead. However, we set off on the track, passing the turnoff to Whakapapaiti hut after 30 minutes, and after another 80 minutes the track started to descend into the stream we were after. We followed the stream up-hill, with occasional crossings, and after 30 minutes of easy travel up through the alpine garden we reached the 28m waterfall which loomed out of the mist. It was an easy climb up around it on the true

right after which we reached another smaller waterfall not shown on the map. It wasn't until there was a slight clearance in the murk that we saw the 55 m waterfall up behind it. The area around this waterfall was carpeted with lush vegetation and we were able to climb up to the rock face and walk behind the waterfall on a ledge.

Thereafter we made our way back to the car by sidling down-hill across country until we landed back on the track, a 5½ hour day. After Saturday night at the Lodge, we headed to National Park to visit Tupapakuria Falls which Linda's group had visited the day before, so we knew the way. Despite what instructions of the internet might say, one should cross the railway line and drive up Fisher Road to the car park. We had an easy 60min walk into the lookout that faces the falls from across the valley; a good view. On the way in we also carried some shingle for the continuing track-work and left it at one of the shingle depots. It took only another 20min to drop down into the valley and walk up to the base of the falls, where it was wet and windy from the falling water. We returned by the same route to complete our shamefully easy three-hour day. There are lots more waterfalls to visit above Whakapapaiti hut, so we will probably be going back. We were Adam Matich and Jenny McCarthy.

## **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April: WWWs enjoy Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary and Zekes Hut**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen Naylor

16 Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers and their vehicles assembled in the minimal provision made for car parking at the road side at the start of the track to the Hihitahi Forest sanctuary. It had been a glorious drive to get there, made in ideal conditions; even the traffic was light. And so at about 9.30am we proceeded across the first paddock to the bottleneck formed by the one-at-a-time swing bridge. Here, surrogate trip leader Marion spotted a large trout in the Hautapu River; sadly this sighting was not independently verified and so does not feature in the title of the tramp. Soon the happy sound could be heard of trampers squelching through the first of the spring-fed mud holes. These were in low ebb compared to some now legendary past muddy encounters. The consensus was that the reserve was as dry as anybody had ever seen it. This dry state, and some steps recently cut by some kind soul made the steep mud cliff climb less of a challenge than often and so we soon found ourselves at height of about 920m ready for the steady climb to the trig point and the expected view of the mountain. The bush was beautiful and there was plenty of bird song. The track was overgrown, in need of cutting and the removal of a recent crop of wind thrown trees, so in a few places the going was slow. By about 11.30am all trampers had achieved the trig point at about 1111m and had enjoyed the view of the mountain. A few chose to eat and continue to enjoy the view but most made it to the hut. We were all safely out, changed and on the road by 3pm after a tramp memorable for great views, comfortable temperatures and an absence of wind. Coffee cakes and conversation at Le Cafe Telephonique in Taihape rounded off a memorable day.



*The bottle neck swing bridge*



*A great opportunity to pose with Mt Ruapehu*



Thanks to trip organiser Christine and trip leader on the spot, Marion also our drivers including van driver Evan.

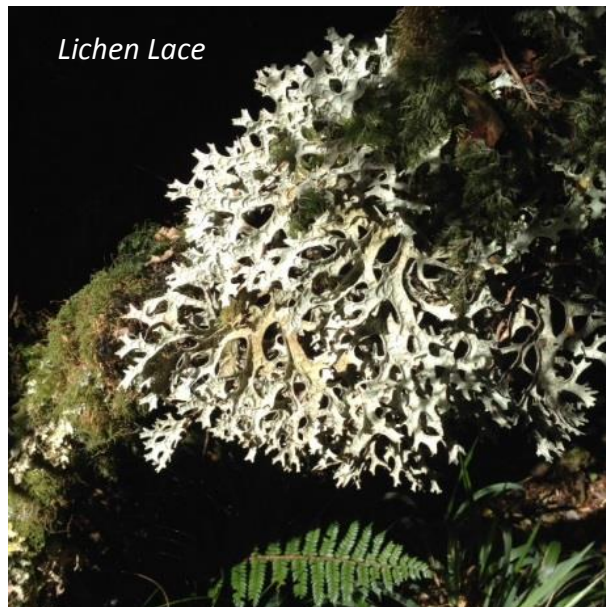
## **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May: WWWs tramp Arapaepae (Staircase to Heaven deferred)**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen Naylor

An unsuitable weather forecast led the Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers to defer a planned tramp on the new track in favour of tramping the Arapaepae/Kohitere Scenic Reserve.

Starting from Gladstone Road/Denton Road, the trail ascends on a steady gradient through the pine forest until it reaches a junction on the ridgeline (2.3km) where it turns left and follows the ridge north. Walking north, through the cleared areas, there are views east to the Tararua Ranges and west over Levin and the Horowhenua with the best view of all being from a large cleared area "The Arapaepae Lookout" which is 80m from the Ridge Road junction. Most of the group stopped for morning tea there and later on return for lunch. From here Kapiti Island is easily visible and on clear days the South Island, Mt Taranaki and Mt Ruapehu can also be seen. Following Ridge Road for a further 1.2km to Spencer Junction, there are good views into the Ohau and Makahika Valleys. The trail then descends and passes through an area of native bush, designated the Bentons Bush Covenant and managed by the Department of Conservation. Nearing the bottom the trail passes an old rock quarry site and crosses the bridged Makahika Stream before reaching the locked gate onto Gladstone Road.



26 trampers started from the Denton Road/Gladstone Road entrance; most tramped the-in-and-out a distance of 14+km with a total climb of 296+206=502m in about 4 hours. On a humid day, this was hot work! Some went part way and some also visited the cell tower and trig point. Many also visited the bush reserve at the junction of Denton Road, Gladstone Road and Queen Street before muster and a tramp through the Papiatonga scenic reserve. From the high points dark clouds were to be seen over to the south around the Stairway but for us it was a pleasant day with no rain and little wind.



*Some of the group*



*Lunchtime*



*Bottoms up*

Thanks to trip leader Harold and our drivers including Evan for driving the club minibus.

## **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May: Shorts Knights Loop**

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: John B

A group of 21 Thursday Trampers set off up Shorts track with the goal of reaching Toka. Conditions started out perfect as we climbed, but the forecast rain could be seen rapidly approaching as we reached the open tussock tops. Quickly on with raincoats and gloves..... as a blustery cold wind was blowing rain sideways across us and the visibility deteriorated. We battled across the tops and headed straight down Knights track. No side trip to Toka today! The rain made the track down very slippery and many of us had slips and slides but we all got out safely. Thanks to Chris for leading this one.



*Heading up in perfect conditions*



*Deteriorating weather above the bushline*

## **Weekend 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> May: Dundas Loop**

Report: Jean Garman

Photos: Jean Garman & Ivan Rienks



*Morning tea at Herepai Hut*

Seven of us congregated at the Putara Road end bright and early on Saturday morning. We skipped off up the track heading towards Herepai hut, which we reached in time for morning tea. As we climbed above the hut there was a gentle breeze and lots of sunshine although further up the ridgeline we could see cloud spilling over from the west. Luckily it only seemed to be blanketing the range from around Ruapae to near Pukemoremore with the ranges to the south being clear. While it had been quite a warm and consequently sweaty day once we entered the cloud things chilled down considerably and extra layers, hats and gloves made an appearance. The cool breeze that had been so pleasant was no longer so. We made our way up and down over the many peaks in the ridgeline hoping the cloud hadn't come in

further and that we would in fact emerge from its shroud before we dropped down to Dundas Hut.



*Emerging from the cloud bank*



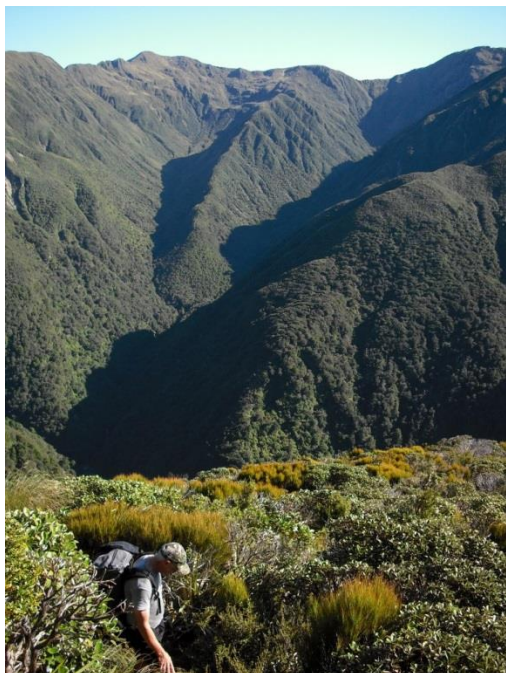
*Looking back along the range*

We were in luck, as we approached Pukemoremore the cloud thinned and we broke free of it. The wind had completely disappeared and as now the sun was somewhat closer to the horizon the light had taken on a glorious golden hue. Many photographs were taken and awed exclamations of the astounding views were made as we travelled along the final stretch of ridgeline before dropping down to the hut. Dundas is a standard NZFS 6 bunk hut with no fire and as there were seven of us we were pleased no one else had chosen this weekend to visit the hut (we were prepared for people to camp out if necessary). Adam volunteered to sleep on the floor, probably so he was out of reach of snore stopping prods, so the rest of us got bunks. We had a pleasant evening with lots of food and even a little red wine. The final trips outside before climbing into the sleeping bags brought many ohhs and ahhs as the stars were exceptionally clear.



*Descending to Dundas Hut*

We were up at the crack of dawn the next day in anticipation of it being a long day. Once more we were treated to a stunningly clear day with not a breath of wind. There must have still been cloud in the west as a small amount was spilling through the saddle between East and West peak but it looked like we would be in the clear all day. It was a long drop down the spur that Dundas hut is on the side of then quite a scramble around the sidle track which finally dropped us into the Ruamahunga River. Once upon a time there was a wire across this crossing but these have gone out of vogue so it was coiled up in the bushes. Luckily the river level was low and some careful rock hopping meant it was possible to cross keeping the feet relatively dry. Jenny chose to wade the river and got the bottom of her shorts wet. Morning tea was consumed then the long steep haul up to Cattle Ridge began. The quick sped off and the steady plodded on all reaching Cattle Ridge hut for lunch. The hut is still in a very poor state and even though sufficient materials to pretty much rebuild the hut had been flown on to site mid-February, no work had actually taken place. We weren't optimistic that some of the non-tanalised wood outside would survive winter and the bags of concrete in the newly erected shed may be protected from rain but snow could blow in and we suspected that if left there till spring, water would infiltrate the packaging and there would be a lot of solid lumps to deal with.



*Climbing up to Cattle Ridge*



*The yet to be renovated Cattle Ridge hut*

Yet another big descent brought us down to Roaring Stag hut for afternoon tea but we did not linger long as time was creeping on and it gets dark alarmingly early these days so torches were placed within easy reach. A steady pace was set heading out and on the final stretch we observed all the colour leaving our surrounds but we managed to stumble out to the vehicles in a grey world without the use of a torch.

A weekend of absolutely stunning weather, stunning views and great company. It was very rewarding to have the company of Sara and Paul who are quite new to the club and to see their excitement at going somewhere different, their appreciation of the stunning weather and views - although they may have got sick of hearing 'the weather is hardly ever like this' and to see Sara deal with all the challenges of the tramp and make it out the end still smiling.

We were Paul and Sara Joice, Adam Matich, Jenny McCarthy, Dave Mitchell, Ivan Rienks and Jean Garman



**Contact Details**

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**Committee 2015 - 2016**

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**General Committee:** Bev Akers, Bob Hodgson, Howard Nicholson, Rob Pringle

**Appointees**

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Facebook	Ivan Rienks	<a href="mailto:facebook@mtsc.org.nz">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>	

**New Members**

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Secunder who are current MTSC members and have been so for at least one year. New memberships are confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting. Prospective members are encouraged to go on a club trip or attend a club night before joining. For further information or an application form please see the club website.

**Club Equipment**

Hire equipment: we have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, tent flies (small and large), snow mats, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, food dehydrator and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have two personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

**Website [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz)**

This contains club information, photos, contact details and back issues of this newsletter, Beechleaves. The club website is maintained by Howard Nicholson (06) 357 6325 and is kindly hosted by **Inspire Net**, a locally based company.

**Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>**

**Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu**

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz) or phone (06) 356 9450. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by cheque to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410, by cash in person or internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300.

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Guests</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$35</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>\$28</b>	<b>\$43</b>
<b>Primary School</b>	<b>\$23</b>	<b>\$38</b>
<b>Pre-school (3-5 yo)</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>\$10</b>

The Lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.

**Booking the MTSC Van**

For bookings: Contact Ken Mercer (06) 356 7497. Cancellations should be made as soon as practicable to accommodate other potential users. A fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.